

This week we pause to honor Jim Ridling as he retires from the post of President and CEO of Southern Guaranty Insurance Company in Montgomery. Jim was never content with building Southern Guaranty into a business success. He also focused his sights on making Montgomery a continued success. And we are ever grateful. I wish him and his wife Catherine all the best, but I somehow believe that Jim's days of service to Montgomery are far from over.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL MITCHELL PAIGE

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to the life of one of our nation's greatest, and most decorated, war heroes Marine Colonel Mitchell Paige. Colonel Paige passed away this past weekend on November 15, 2003 in his home in La Quinta, California. He is survived by his wife Marilyn, his six children, fifteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. I want to extend my deepest condolences to Marilyn, who is a wonderful woman and whom I know Colonel Paige loved very deeply, as well as her entire family.

Colonel Paige served with distinction in the Marine Corps for nearly twenty-eight years with a career that spanned from the date of his enlistment on September 1, 1936 to his retirement on July 1, 1964. The numerous awards and medals bestowed upon Colonel Paige included the Medal of Honor, the Purple Heart, and the Presidential Unit Citation.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt bestowed the Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor given a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, on then Platoon Sergeant Paige for his heroic actions on October 26, 1942 during World War II's Battle of Guadalcanal. His career and service to our nation are so exemplary that the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Michael W. Hagee, added Colonel Paige's autobiography, "A Marine Named Mitch," to the U.S. Marine Reading Program. His actions are so legendary that the Hasbro Toy Company used his likeness for their 1998 Medal of Honor GI Joe model.

Words cannot justly describe the valor and steadfastness to duty that were displayed by Colonel Paige during the Battle of Guadalcanal. To understand his heroism, one must first understand the importance of the airstrip that his Marine Platoon fought to control during the fall of 1942. During that fall, the Japanese Army was building an airstrip in the Solomon Islands from which they would be able to disrupt communication and supply lines between the United States, Australia and Great Britain. On August 7, 1942, in a surprise attack, the Marines landed and quickly seized control of the field. The Marines completed construction and put the field into operation. In the battles that followed, the two sides continued to struggle for control of the island.

On October 26, 1942, Platoon Sergeant Paige led his platoon of thirty-three men in defending the critical ridge from which the opposing forces planned to launch their final assault against the airfield. During the fighting, each and every member of Paige's platoon

was wounded or killed. The only Marine able to fight, Paige moved up and down the line pulling the dead and wounded back into their foxholes. Sergeant Paige held the Japanese Army back by firing short bursts from each of the four water-cooled Browning machine guns that his platoon had been given to defend the critical ridge. His actions convinced the Japanese that the crest of the hill was well defended. In truth, it was, defended by a single Marine named Platoon Sergeant Mitchell Paige.

Sergeant Paige's heroism did not end there. In the morning mist, near the end of the fighting, Sergeant Paige grabbed one of the water-cooled Brownings, a job for which the weapon was never designed, and walked down the hill towards the location of the enemy who were preparing to outflank his position. Firing as he went, Sergeant Paige took out the remaining enemy forces on the ridge. Later, joined by a makeshift line consisting of communication personnel, riflemen, runners, cooks and messman, Sergeant Paige led a bayonet counterattack against the enemy. The counterattack was successful and the Japanese forces, having suffered staggering losses, retreated all because a single Marine fought with valor and distinction on a small island a little over sixty-one years ago.

After the Battle of Guadalcanal, Colonel Paige continued to serve in the Marines for another twenty-two years. His service and love of country can best be summed up in his own words: "I am proud to be a citizen of a nation whose objective is peace and goodwill for all mankind. A nation which has contributed so much for the benefit of peoples all over the world. A nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all. I am proud to be an American. I can never believe it is old fashioned to love our Flag and Country nor can I ever believe it is being square to stand in readiness behind our Flag to defend those ideals for which it stands against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

America owes Colonel Paige a debt of gratitude. His actions, the actions of a single Marine, most certainly turned the tide in the Pacific Conflict during World War II. His actions saved countless lives of American servicemen and his actions quite literally won the War. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to the life of a man who lived with valor and honor, a man who loved his country and fought bravely defending her, a man who was a patriot and an American Hero, Marine Colonel Mitchell Paige.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to participate in the following votes due to a personal matter that kept me at home. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote 620, on S.J. Res. 22, recognizing the Agriculture Research Service of the Department of Agriculture, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote 621, on S.J. Res. 18, commending the Inspectors General, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote 622, on H. Con. Res. 299, honoring Mr. Sargent Shriver, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote 623, on the motion to change the convening time, I would have voted "yes."

COMMENDING THE RECORDING ACADEMY ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF ITS CULTURAL POLICY INITIATIVE

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, also known as the Recording Academy, on the announcement of the GRAMMY Cultural Policy Initiative.

The Recording Academy is dedicated to improving the quality of life and cultural condition for music and those who make it. An organization of 18,000 musicians, songwriters, producers and other recording professionals, the Recording Academy is internationally known for the GRAMMY Awards, and is responsible for numerous groundbreaking outreach, professional development, cultural enrichment, education and human services programs.

An outstanding example of the Recording Academy's commitment to music is the National Recording Registry at the Library of Congress. It was an honor for me to be a sponsor with Representative STENY HOYER of the National Recording Preservation Act of 2000 which established the registry. The Recording Academy now works with the Library of Congress to ensure the preservation of our national audio heritage for the enjoyment and education of generations to come. As a result of these efforts the National Recording Registry at the Library of Congress includes early recordings by ragtime composer Scott Joplin, inventor Thomas Edison, and singer Bessie Smith, plus more recent works by Bob Dylan, Aretha Franklin, and Frank Sinatra.

The first 50 recordings in the National Recording Registry truly represent the breadth and brilliance of our recorded heritage in both music and the spoken word, and each year more landmark recordings will be preserved and protected through their addition to the Registry.

To further advance its cultural mission, the Recording Academy unveiled its GRAMMY Cultural Policy Initiative on September 17 in Washington. Neil Portnow, President of the Recording Academy, launched this Initiative on behalf of NARAS to advance the rights of recording artists through advocacy, education and dialogue. Coordinated by Daryl Friedman, Senior Executive Director of the Washington office of the Recording Academy, the advocacy team will utilize its chapters and membership nationwide to educate the public through seminars and other grassroots events.

The Academy is also set to launch the GRAMMY Town Hall, a nationwide series of discussions with music industry leaders on critical issues such as file sharing, copyright protection, and intellectual property.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of music to my life and to the lives of people around the world cannot be overstated. Music transcends borders and breaks down cultural barriers. Young